

# SHOP talk

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Plant Operations Support Program

Spring 2002

## Members Given Good Grades Despite Sick Budgets, Other Challenges

*The future looks bright, 'patience is the virtue'*

By Bob MacKenzie

### Part one of a two-part series

Revenue shortfalls exacerbated by the September 11 attack may be wreaking havoc with state, district, campus or municipality budgets but public facilities managers are taking them in stride. There are mounting pressures for those same managers and their staffs to assume greater responsibilities in the security arena, as reported in fall *Shop Talk*. We've also heard ominous news of training and recruiting shortfalls in member organizations. Additionally, pressures to accelerate transitions to computerized maintenance management systems and to improve preventive maintenance should logically impact member operations. This article will show these and other pressing challenges are being addressed and resolved by members with steady determination, innovation and cooperation. *Shop Talk* found members are coping with budgetary, staffing and other challenges with can-do attitudes and aplomb. Issues such as these will likely be aired and discussed further during the upcoming Consortium videoconference, **"Enhancing stewardship in spite of budget woes,"** taking place 10:00 a.m. to Noon, Tuesday, April 23, 2002. Call your Consortium staff (360) 902-7338 for details and reserve a seat early.

### 9-11 Impacts

The events of September 11, 2001 apparently did not have a direct, deleterious effect on member operations. Although obviously tragic in many ways, the impact to Consortium members

appears to be likened to that of a warning shot...are we ready? Most members agree the world has been changed unalterably and these new realities require resourcefulness and cooperation to maintain high standards of service.

Consortium staff have been asked by school districts, state agencies and municipalities to conduct a number of on-site security assessments. Bob Hicks is the facility manager for the south central region of Washington state's Department of Transportation (WSDOT) in Yakima.



Bob Hicks

"Our Facilities Management team is in the process of developing a risk and threat assessment form to determine what may or may not need to be done to our sites and buildings to lower risk of threats," he said. "Tenant expectations have not significantly

changed regarding our maintenance operation since the 9-11 tragedy."

The risk and assessment process developed by WSDOT has been validated at Thurston County sites. If found useful and practical, portions of the process may be adopted by other Consortium members. A direct effect of the 9-11 attack is evident in many school districts around the country. Washington's Northshore School District, near Seattle, has implemented an



Greg Plummer (pointing), Community Colleges of Spokane district director of facilities, discusses capital construction challenges with Becky Crow, district facilities operations manager; and Ed Simpson, district facilities maintenance manager (Photo provided courtesy, Community Colleges of Spokane)

ID badge system that had been on the drawing boards for some time.

"We had been thinking about this for over a couple years, but this pushed us to act on the project," said Terry Taylor, director of district utilities. "We are using an advanced ID badge with a hologram style mark and/or photo that is difficult to duplicate."

Kit Duke, facilities manager for the Alaska Court System, reports heightened security measures put into place following the attack, including adjustments to public parking close to buildings. Oregon Youth Authority Facilities Director Andy Golay said the 9-11 attack did not have a direct effect on his organization's programs or policies. As a correctional institute, "We already had security as a top priority and did not need to increase or change our awareness or practices," he said.

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**2** Sustainable operations, true innovation

**3** Computer to kids - a success story

**4** Challenges overcome with determination, creativity

**6** How RCM's pay for themselves many times over

**7** Sign up now for April videoconference

**8** Electronic *Shop Talk* promises enhanced support

# Around the Consortium....

## Members practice sustainable operations, reap big dividends

Thanks to GA's Division of Capitol Facilities, Office of Capital Programs, many Consortium members obtained free or reduced cost material and equipment that would have otherwise ended up at a

were tangible as well.

"This is a win-win for all concerned," said Brian Miller, site observer for the Prichard Library project. "Consortium members have taken advantage of shelves, the phones, a satellite dish and even plants that otherwise would have been removed, destroyed or recycled. In the end, taxpayers have really benefited from the networking and cooperation of Consortium members."

Dr. Mark Jacobson, superintendent of Ocosta School District in Westport, Washington, joined dozens of other members in picking up sets of surplus metal shelves, book cases and other items from the construction site. Additionally, his district took advantage of the



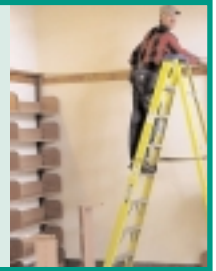
**James Kimball (l)**, installation technician with Olympic Telephone, explains the function of a piece of switching gear to POS Consortium Intern **Adrienne Adams** in the Prichard Library in Olympia. (Photo by Bob MacKenzie).

recycler or in a landfill. A number of surplus/salvage items were recently made available when the Prichard Library on the Washington State Capitol Campus underwent a major remodel. The building was the former site of the State Library, but will soon house the Senate while the Capitol building undergoes earthquake repair and a major facelift. Total value to Consortium members was conservatively notched at more than \$150,000 and the savings to the project

than \$86,000, according to Jacobson. "It's this type of proactive, cooperative

salvaging of the library's older phone system through its membership in the Consortium. The phones will be slightly modified and installed in Ocosta by Olympic Telephone of Olympia. The transaction saved the district more

**Joel Thomas**, Easton School District board member and community volunteer, designed a method of installing shelves salvaged from the Prichard Library. (Photo provided courtesy Easton School District).



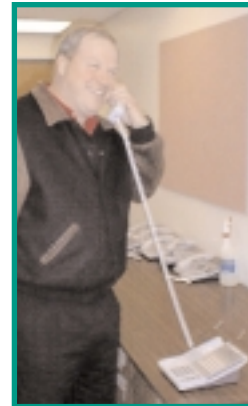
activity that sets the Consortium apart," said Jacobson. "We've consistently received value worth more than five, 10 even 50 times our membership fee ... absolutely super!"

These and other Consortium offerings are not only windfalls for members; they're good for the environment and maximize precious taxpayer resources. They provide an operational component to sustainable design and construction. Learn more about this critical arena by visiting GA's new Sustainable Design and Construction website @ [www.ga.wa.gov/eas/green/index.html](http://www.ga.wa.gov/eas/green/index.html)

**Contact Stuart Simpson, Energy Engineer, (360) 902-7199, E-mail [ssimpson@ga.wa.gov](mailto:ssimpson@ga.wa.gov)**



**Dave Boyer** (behind fence) and **Brian Miller** speak with Consortium Manager **Bob MacKenzie** about salvage details at the former library on the State's Capitol Campus in Olympia. Boyer is a zone electrician and Miller the library project site observer. Both are members of GA's Division of Capitol Facilities. (Photo by Adrienne Jones).



**Dr. Mark Jacobson** shows off the "new" phones recently transferred as salvage from the Prichard Library project. Olympic Telephones will be installing the telephones system in Ocosta School District buildings in the next two months. (Photo by Bob MacKenzie)

## The Plant Operations Support Consortium

*New members appear in green and renewing members are listed in gray type. Welcome and thanks on behalf of the Consortium!*

### School Districts

Cascade  
Chehalis  
Clover Park  
Columbia-Burbank  
Coquitlam, BC  
Dayton  
Delta, BC  
Eatonville  
Enumclaw  
Federal Way  
Highline  
Hoquiam  
Issaquah  
Ketchikan, AK  
Lacrosse  
Marysville  
Mission, BC  
Montesano  
Mukilteo  
Northshore

### North Thurston

Oak Harbor  
Ocean Beach  
Ocosta  
Okanogan Skaha, BC  
Peninsula  
Renton  
Rochester  
Sequim  
South Kitsap  
Snohomish  
Toledo  
Vancouver  
Wenatchee  
White River  
Wishkah Valley  
Yelm

### Universities/Colleges

Bellevue CC  
Big Bend CC  
Clark College

### Columbia Basin CC

Cnty Colleges of Spokane  
Highline CC  
Olympic Community College  
Renton TC  
Skagit Valley College  
The Evergreen State College  
Univ. of Washington

### Municipalities

City of Marysville  
City of Tukwila  
City of Snohomish  
Clark County  
Cowlitz County  
Jefferson County  
King County Metro South  
Kitsap County  
Lewis County  
Pierce County  
Whatcom County

### Canada

Attorney General, BC  
Municipality of Peel, ON  
Technical Value Dept, BC Building Corp

### Ports

Port of Anacortes  
Port of Edmonds  
Port of Ephrata  
Port of Longview  
Port of Mattawa  
Port of Olympia  
Port of Pasco  
Port of Ridgefield  
Port of Seattle, Sea-Tac Airport  
Port of Sunnyside  
Port of Walla Walla, Walla Walla Airport

### States

Alaska  
Idaho Dept. of Admin.

Oregon Dept. of Admin. Svc.  
Oregon Youth Authority

### Washington State Agencies

Corrections  
Ecology  
General Administration  
Health  
Information Services  
Liquor Control Board  
Military  
Natural Resources  
Parks & Recreation  
School for the Deaf  
Social & Health Services  
Transportation  
Veterans Affairs  
Washington State Patrol



# Foster kids benefit from surplus computers

by Jim Erskine, GA Public Affairs

The old saying, 'one man's junk is another man's treasure' gets a new twist when the Plant Operations Support Program helps one client dispose of unwanted surplus that another one gratefully receives – and foster children will gain the benefits.

In the next few months, surplus Macintosh computers belonging to the Clover Park School District will be "indefinitely loaned" to about 25 to 40 foster children under the supervision of the Department of Social and Health Services (DSHS). The children get to keep the computers for their personal use, even if they move to a different foster home. The goal of the project is to provide computers to children with special educational needs.

"For a variety of reasons, including abuse and moving around, many foster kids have a lot of catching up to do academically," says Keli Regan, Social and Health program manager with DSHS. "A computer is a good way to accelerate the process,"

DSHS oversees the care and protection of about 11,000 foster children in the state. Regan works with about 400 foster children in six western Washington counties. Part of her job is to get essential resources, like computers, for foster children and their families. Even though government and school district warehouses are loaded with surplus computers, getting them to foster children isn't easy, says Regan.

"We have lots of turnover of equipment at the agency," she says. "But, state rules are rigid about donating computers to individuals for private use."

Regan explored every avenue she could think at DSHS, but kept "hitting walls." At the suggestion of others within the agency, she contacted Plant Operations. Regan's request went to Tonya Darby, a Plant Operation program intern, who was working with another member with a computer problem.

Clover Park School District contacted Plant Operations last summer to dispose of about 450 surplus computers. Generally, the school district sells old computers at state surplus auctions, but a glut of used machines has eliminated that market. Recycling and disposal of the machines is difficult because of environmental regulations. With the start of the school year coming, the school district, in need of warehouse space, needed to find a use for the computers at no cost.

***"Plant Operations made it happen," Keli Regan***

Plant Operations offered a plan to the school district to loan its surplus computers to DSHS. The school board approved the plan in August and in September more than 100 computers were picked up by DSHS at the school district's warehouse in Lakewood.

"The plan satisfied the needs of both clients," says Bob MacKenzie, Plant Operations Support Consortium manager. "We were delighted to help our clients breakthrough hurdles to provide computers to the kids."

Computer technicians at DSHS are going

through the surplus hardware and expect to have about 70 packages ready to give to foster children in the next few months.

"After trying unsuccessfully for eight months to get computer to kids, it was a grand epiphany of sorts when I started working with Tonya," says Regan. "Plant Operations made it happen."

Regan says she will promote the idea with her DSHS counterparts in other areas of the state. "The press releases, governor's report and word of mouth have really helped to expand this project. Before Clover Park, there were very sporadic and external ways of getting computers. We now have legislators, State management, lobbyists and others who have become interested in what we are doing. We have been asked to take part in many-a discussion regarding this project and it looks like the process of accessing, obtaining and distributing computers for foster kids will eventually become easier."

**For more information about computers to kids programs, contact your Consortium staff (360) 902-7338.**



**Shop Talk** is a quarterly publication of the Plant Operations Support program. The newsletter is intended to be an informative and operationally-oriented medium for public facilities managers. Contents herein are also available on the program's web site at [www.ga.wa.gov/plant](http://www.ga.wa.gov/plant)

We welcome feedback on the newsletter's contents and input from readers. We reserve the right to edit correspondence to conform to space limitations. Bob MacKenzie is program manager and editor (360) 902-7257 or e-mail [bmacken@ga.wa.gov](mailto:bmacken@ga.wa.gov). Special thanks to Steve Valandra, AnneMarie Bammert, Phil Person and Amanda Leaverton for editing assistance. Plant Operations Support does not make warranty or representation, either expressed or implied, with respect to accuracy, completeness or utility of the information contained herein. Plant Operations Support assumes no liability of any kind whatsoever resulting from the use of, or reliance upon, any information contained in this newsletter.

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R.D. Fukai, Director.

To request this information in alternative formats please call (360) 902-7215, or TDD (360) 664-3799.

## Citizen Soldier

**Phil Person**, Consortium Senior Project Coordinator, (center) became Lieutenant Colonel Phil Person in the U.S. Army reserve at a promotion ceremony at the Allen Reserve Center, Fort Lewis, WA in January 2002. Person is shaking hands with the presiding officer, Col. **Douglas Richardson**, commander of the 7th Brigade, 104th Division headquartered at Fort Lewis. Also pictured is Lt. Col. Person's father, **Lawrence (Larry) Person**, who traveled from Minnesota to attend the ceremony. Larry Person is a retired army veteran including service during WWII with the 34th Infantry Division, including campaigns in North Africa, Sicily and Italy. (U.S. Army photo)



# Challenges

(Cont. from Page 1)



Alan Bigger

Alan Bigger, director of custodial operations at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana, has been a popular speaker/panelist during Consortium videoconferences in the past and has agreed to participate again

during the upcoming event in April. He is considered an expert on customer service and custodial operations.

***"Future building construction will be designed with increased security considerations reflective of the times in which we live," Alan Bigger, University of Notre Dame.***

"From our perspective, everyone is much more aware of what is happening around them since 9-11," he said. "Future building construction will be designed with increased security considerations reflective of the times in which we live."

## Capital budget impacts

Most Consortium members see similar, if less severe, budget cuts looming on the horizon and are taking steps to minimize their impact on routine and critical operations. Washington state briefly suspended all capital-funded projects soon after the 9-11 attack, then restarted them.



Dave Turpen

Its Legislature passed a stimulus package for the state amid an even gloomier economic outlook. It received the Governor's approval and was being implemented at press time.

***"The most dramatic effect of 9-11 is the delay that the budget approval process caused," Dave Turpen, facility manager, Washington state's School for the Deaf***

"The most dramatic effect of 9-11 is the delay that the budget approval process caused," said Dave Turpen, facility manager of the Washington State School for the Deaf in Vancouver. "Capital projects were put on hold and time was lost, putting more pressure on the maintenance department to keep facilities up and running. Everyone felt we were underfunded over the years and this aftermath has amplified this situation."

Pete Babington is director of facilities and operations for Highline Community College in Washington. He has heard talk of deep cuts in state agencies, but hopes the cuts will bypass community colleges.

"The four-year universities and colleges and larger state agencies are likely going to be tasked to cut 5 to 15 percent in operating expenses," Babington said. "Of more critical impact to us is how the state responds to capital budgeting. We need to do most of our construction during summer quarter, so we need to begin design in the fall/winter."

Greg Plummer is facilities director of Community Colleges of Spokane. He agrees that capital dollars will be affected by a general economic downturn.

"We are minimizing our expenditures of capital repair, maintenance and improvement (RMI) to the most essential projects," he said. "We do this in anticipation of a reduction of operations funding next fiscal year which will cause more failures in equipment (due to lack of, or reduced, preventive maintenance), and which will result in needed repairs utilizing those RMI funds."

Plummer said the capital freeze, "now lifted, did slow down the schedules of some much needed construction projects. The cuts anticipated in operating funds for next year is causing a slowdown in some of our maintenance type spending this year."

Although not directly linked to the 9-11 attacks, budget cuts are part of Canadian member professional lives as well.

"Our maintenance operations have had a budget cut of \$215,000 this fall, resulting in significant reductions to interior painting schedules, grounds maintenance, employment of casual workers, and

carpentry supplies," said Bill Low, director of facilities for Coquitlam School District #43 in British Columbia. "The future does not look

favorable for a return to previous funding levels."

## Status of PM programs "tenuous"

To their credit, Consortium members are universal in their determination to continue preventive maintenance programs.

Pete Babington at Highline Community College will do what he can to continue his preventive maintenance program. Greg Plummer at the Community Colleges of Spokane in eastern Washington believes the future is "grim" for preventive maintenance.

***"We will do whatever it takes to do the best that we can with the resources we are provided," Greg Plummer, facilities director, Community Colleges of Spokane***

"We already spend too much on corrective maintenance rather than preventive maintenance," said Plummer. "The budget outlook is that things will get worse before they get better. This will have a negative effect on the learning environment for our students and on the morale of the faculty and staff who support our institution. However, we will do whatever it takes to do the best that we can with the resources we are provided."



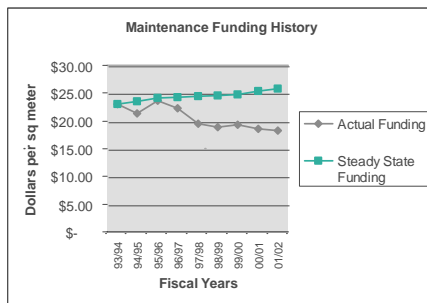
Bill Low, P. Eng



Bill Low reports his staff at Coquitlam School District #43 is "trying to continue preventive maintenance of buildings while extending cycles of painting and grounds maintenance. We keep adding more facilities to cope with population growth while the maintenance budget declines."

Low provides a graph to empirically show the decline in Coquitlam's dollars per square meter for maintenance.

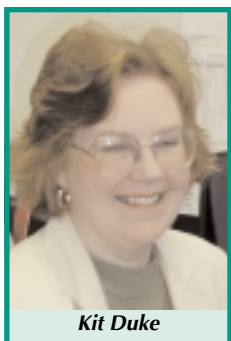
"The maintenance budget has not kept up with either the Consumer Price Index (inflation), nor the increase in square meters of buildings to be maintained in the district," said Low. "Steady state funding is the level of funding required to keep maintaining facilities at the level of maintenance in 1993, which was not necessarily the



optimum level of funding. It was far short of the recommended two percent of asset value."

Dave Turpen remains optimistic. "The future looks bright, patience is the virtue," he said. "We are going to have a new energy management system this year included in one of our projects. We then will have a better handle on preventive maintenance work."

The facility maintenance department at the School for the Deaf used to pay for a number of repairs, fixes, and new additions to rooms, buildings, and programs. "That is coming to a stop," said Turpen.



Kit Duke

"Requests now are looked at more closely and who pays."

Like Turpen, Bob Hicks in Yakima sees little change in the future for their support of region-wide PM

programs. "WSDOT is committed to a viable preventive maintenance program and our region sees its benefits on a daily basis."

Northshore School District just began its formal preventive maintenance program, Terry Taylor said. "We have always used custodial staff to change filters and belts while adding oil and/or grease. We are looking to take it a step further and work on all boilers (we use the smaller boilers so we have over 80 in the district)."

Andy Golay is straightforward about his organization's prospects for supporting a viable preventive maintenance program.

"PM will definitely be reduced whether facilities are closed completely or just scaled back," he said. "If a facility is closed, the maintenance staff will most likely also be laid off. This presents issues around how to maintain a mothballed facility with off-site staff. If a facility is scaled back, the maintenance staff will be reduced also. This increases the workload of the remaining staff since they now have to maintain the remaining open building plus the mothballed or closed buildings."

North to Alaska, Kit Duke sees preventive maintenance as an absolute necessity. "No matter what, I won't sacrifice PM in occupied buildings!"

**Look for more member responses to different challenges as Part 2 of this series in the electronic summer issue of Shop Talk. Have comments on those presented above? Write or e-mail us and provide your perspectives so we can benefit and learn from your experiences. Call POS Consortium staff (360) 902-7257. Amanda Leaverton assisted in assembling this article. Mandy is a POS staff intern and a graduate student at St. Martins College in Lacey. Her major area of study is elementary special education.**



Andy Golay

## Registration opens for Building Operator Certification

### in Spokane, Tacoma, Portland

Registration for Building Operator Certification (BOC) training opens this spring in three new locations. A BOC Level I course series will be offered in Spokane from March 27 to October 23, 2002. Topics include HVAC systems and controls, energy conservation techniques, electrical systems, and IAQ.

Level II course series will be offered in Tacoma and Portland as well. Level II topics include preventive maintenance, electrical system diagnostics, HVAC controls, motor systems, and water efficiency.

BOC is a competency-based training and certification for building operators working in schools, office buildings, manufacturing facilities, universities, hospitality and health care. The training is designed to help operators improve the energy efficiency of their facilities through informative classes and hands-on project assignments in their buildings. The certification provides a credential for professional development while also offering employers a way to identify skilled operators.



"The courses are not just beneficial to maintenance and operations staff," says Duncan Crump, a senior facilities planner for Washington state and a graduate of the Level I course. "They are helpful to managers who really want to grasp the technical lexicon, learn integration principles and find out what they may expect from their staff."

BOC courses are accredited for continuing education units through the Washington Department of Labor and Industries, and Lower Columbia College.

Over 500 operators in the Northwest have been certified since the program's inception in 1997. Certification is recognized by employers in Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington and is growing nationally in 10 other states. Sponsors of the upcoming series in Spokane, Tacoma and Portland include Avista Utilities, Tacoma Power and the Oregon Institute of Technology.

**For registration information, contact the BOC Office at 206-292-4793 x2, or e-mail BOCemail@aol.com. To review course descriptions and view a list of certified operators, visit the BOC web site at [www.neec.net/boc.htm](http://www.neec.net/boc.htm).**

# Why not have an RCM?

By John McKay, Resource Conservation Manager, Coquitlam School District #43



John McKay, P. Eng

There is a "Catch 22" facing most school districts right now and it is fast becoming a high-stakes issue. It has to do with utility costs and basic

resources to run our educational environment.

We do not have enough money to maintain the spaces and buildings we have, the price of utilities is increasing almost everywhere, and if we shortchange the maintenance, the buildings use more energy and water next year. This probably is not news to anyone trying to balance facilities management with the delivery of educational programs. In reality, the two are inextricably linked. Poor light and air qualities degrade the performance and abilities of teachers and students alike.

What is the answer? We don't propose to know the answer, just part of the answer. That would be to optimize the costs and benefits of energy, comfort, and learning environment. How do we go about doing this? Or perhaps more appropriately, if you could be shown how it might be done, would you do it?

On the facilities side, the consumption of electricity, gas, oil and water — as well as the provision of garbage, recycling and sewer services — are well known and monitored, at least on a cost basis. Errors, changes and deviations can be used to identify problems that are both cost-sensitive and degrade the interior conditions or the environment. Corrections of those equipment conditions can reduce costs and maintain or improve learning conditions.

There has been a recent move to adopt from the commercial building sector the role of the Resource Conservation Manager (RCM). In a school district, this role involves tracking and monitoring

utility consumption at all facilities, checking and correcting bills, negotiating contracts with the lowest cost reliable suppliers, identifying buildings and systems not performing at expected levels and initiating projects to change obsolete technology or wasteful practices and procedures. The RCM also assists in the design and planning of new facilities, and creates awareness programs to support student, custodial, and educator actions in school based teams.

This new staff person may seem to add to the salary burden, but it is not uncommon for them to find water and gas billing errors to offset that salary. If there is one person to review the utilities, and actually rank the schools by use and cost, then scarce resources can be applied to the worst offenders first. Projects can be evaluated for their ability to contribute to reducing operating costs and improving interior conditions and ensure your board is using limited funds to generate the greatest possible savings.

Good energy managers enjoy saving several times their salary each year. The first year can be a difficult one in implementing technical and hardware changes, but also presents a fresh opportunity to catch billing errors and leaks that have been accumulating from prior years. In the second year the simple things get done and the more difficult fixes get addressed. Longer-term planning takes place and major projects are initiated, changes in contracts or suppliers are made, schedules are adjusted and waste eliminated.

In the third year the focus turns to coordinating the major renovations with optimum products and system upgrades. Capital projects for new schools get optimized so that operating costs are in line with funding - not out of control. Finally, the Resource Conservation Manager continues to assist in identifying problems, their causes, and solutions for water and air quality issues.

Sounds good no doubt, but you probably see the conundrum. How to find funds for more staff when you already have a deficit? The answer is complex, but not that difficult. If the savings in the first year can offset the cost, then increasing success in the following years will be

icing on the cake. This is a zero-risk situation, but also identifies the Catch 22. If you don't have someone who can tell what the savings might be, how can you assure yourself that the savings will pay for the manager? The savings are in fact a function of the size of the facilities portfolio, the price of the utilities and the amount of waste in the school. The savings opportunity (a.k.a. as "waste") may be a function of the age and design of the school as well as the climate. The best way to identify the ballpark is to use benchmarking with other schools.

For example, one school board with a \$4 million annual utilities budget has achieved annual savings in excess of \$410,000 in each of the past three years. That manager is proud that he has saved his salary several times over each year. If we can reduce operating costs by applying that sort of expertise - shouldn't every school district have a Resource Conservation Manager?

**For more information about the RCM program, contact John McKay by E-mail: [jomckay@sd43.bc.ca](mailto:jomckay@sd43.bc.ca) or Gwen Haynes (360) 902-7197, E-mail: [ghaynes@ga.wa.gov](mailto:ghaynes@ga.wa.gov). Visit GA's RCM webpage: [www.ga.wa.gov/eas/rcm/](http://www.ga.wa.gov/eas/rcm/)**



**The Resource Conservation Manager for a small school district saved hundreds of dollars annually by establishing a total-building shutdown policy for vacations and holidays.**

## **12th Annual Northwest Plant Engineering & Maintenance Show® Provides Training Alternative in Tight Budget Times**

Your Consortium staff invites you to attend the Northwest Plant Engineering & Maintenance Show (NWPE), taking place May 22 and 23, 2002 at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland.

The Northwest Materials Handling Show again teams up to provide a double benefit at the NWPE. Presented with these shows will be a free two-day conference. Consecutive one-hour sessions on the latest topics concerning Plant Engineering and Maintenance, as well as Material Handling/Packaging & Logistics professionals will be presented during the two days.

With training curtailed because of tight budgets, this show may be the only chance to give your staff updates on cutting edge technology and other plant maintenance topics. Ensure you stop by the Plant Operation Support Consortium booth.

Exhibit Hours: Wednesday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. • Thursday 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Register online at <http://www.proshows.com> or call toll-free (800) 548-1407

### **Managing the Discovery of Potentially Hazardous Materials on Public Facilities**

*Guest Shop Talk article by Scott D. Dwyer and Dennis J.*

*O'Neill, Kleinfelder, Inc.*

A school district facilities manager in Central Washington recently discovered the presence of arsenic in the soil at an elementary school. Arsenic in Central Washington soils is not surprising because it is naturally occurring and was often an active ingredient of pesticides applied to orchards.

State environmental regulations establish an arsenic soil cleanup level of 20 mg/kg for residential soil and this cleanup level would likely be applicable to the elementary school site. Exceeding the soil cleanup level does not necessarily trigger a cleanup requirement. However, it will generally spur the need for further investigation. Finding potentially hazardous materials on a school site will also prompt the health concerns of parents, staff, and students.

To help the school district, Kleinfelder recommended a simple two-part approach to addressing the discovery of arsenic: (1) conduct a limited soil characterization to evaluate the extent of arsenic-affected soil and to establish baseline soil concentrations of arsenic and, (2) develop a reasonable program for communicating the hazards that may be associated with the presence of arsenic in school site soil.

The soil characterization would be comprised of collecting soil samples from several locations across the school site based on a grid pattern. Background samples would also be collected from offsite locations. All samples would be analyzed by a state-accredited laboratory. Equipment requirements for the soil characterization would be minimal: surface soil samples could be collected using a hand-operated auger tool, eliminating the need for heavy drilling equipment. Collection of soil samples is also unlikely to disrupt school operations because sampling could be conducted on a weekend or during the summer months. The soil characterization described here would provide a thorough baseline of information regarding the presence of arsenic in soil at the elementary school.

*(Please see Soil, page 8)*

## **Sign up now for April videoconference**

**“Enhancing stewardship in spite of budget woes” is the title of a Consortium-sponsored and produced videoconference, taking place:**

**Tuesday, April 23, 2002  
10:00 a.m. to 12:00 Noon**

**Nationally known Alan Bigger from University of Notre Dame will explain how he captured awards for customer service and facilities excellence in spite of tight budgets. Increased security tasks, recruiting challenges and other pressing issues will be discussed by panelists and your peers during this exciting, two-hour event. Call AnneMarie Bammert @ (360) 902-7338 or E-mail: [abammer@ga.wa.gov](mailto:abammer@ga.wa.gov) to reserve your seat. FREE!**



**Soil****(Cont. from page 7)**

Kleinfelder also recommended a simple and straightforward risk communication plan to manage public concerns that may accompany the finding of potentially hazardous materials on school property. First, we recommended a letter to faculty, staff, and parents that described the situation and the findings of the soil exploration. The school district's objective should be to remain a trusted source of information and to be perceived as a proactive agency in the protection of the health of their employees and students. Sending a letter, even with bad news, is likely to satisfy this objective. Second, Kleinfelder would prepare a fact sheet for the school district to use when responding to inquiries from employees, parents and the media. The fact sheet would provide answers to questions about potential exposures, health effects, treatment and prevention of health effects, likely sources of the arsenic and the environmental fate and transport of arsenic.

Managing the discovery of potentially hazardous materials on public facilities can be stressful. But developing a plan to investigate such discoveries and communicate with the public will reduce the stress and position you have as a responsible and trusted public agency. Although this article focused on arsenic, similar approaches can be developed for other kinds of contaminants, including pesticides, chlorinated solvents and petroleum hydrocarbons.

**Scott D. Dwyer, PhD, DABT, is a senior toxicologist and leads the risk assessment and toxicology services program at Kleinfelder, Inc. Dennis J. O'Neill is a senior geologist/geochemist with the environmental group at Kleinfelder. O'Neill specializes in environmental investigations and remediation projects. Kleinfelder is a consulting firm specializing in environmental and geotechnical engineering and consulting, and materials testing. Kleinfelder has more than 60 offices in 11 western states. , Kleinfelder, Inc., 2405 – 140th Ave NE, Bellevue, Washington 98005.**

**Shoo Crow!****Bird control a growing concern for public facilities***By Ray Williamson, Paratex Pest Control*

Birds are afforded considerable protection by laws, regulations and public sentiment. While the public accepts lethal control measures against insects, rodents, weeds and disease organisms, opposition to bird poisonings from various segments of the general public can be expected.

Therefore, public relations must be an integral part of any bird management program. Your personnel or customers should be educated as to why a particular bird control project is necessary.

Although some birds are more likely to become pests than others are, no particular species can be categorized as good or bad. Birds may be beneficial, neutral or harmful to man's interests, depending upon time, location and activity.

Birds may become pests by displacing desirable birds, roosting or nesting around human habitations, contaminating foods, colliding with aircraft, carrying diseases or ectoparasites affecting man and causing hazardous or unpleasant walking or working conditions. When bird activities affect our health and economy, an effort should be made to remove them.

We can develop a detailed bird management program for each job undertaken. Such a program should include careful inspections and surveys to determine pest species, feeding areas, roosting areas and any special conditions. It should outline the methods and tools to reduce or eliminate the pest birds and to limit reinfestation, and may include several alternative strategies dependent on variable conditions. The bird management program must comply with all federal, state and local laws and regulations, and be safe and environmentally sound.

Finally any program should also include a public-relations strategy to reduce public concerns over any bird injury or trapping program.

**For more information, contact Michael Carette-Meyers, Paratex Pest control, (800) 542-1234.**

**Shop Talk Newsletter to Receive Electronic Make Over**

It's official; **Shop Talk** will be transitioning to a completely on-line version beginning with the summer 2002 edition. Since 1996 **Shop Talk**, the official newsletter of the Plant Operation Support Consortium, has been printed in 1,500 copies and appears on the web page in a PDF format.

"There are so many more resources we can make available to our members by creating the newsletter in HTML format and 'publishing' on-line," said Bob MacKenzie, program manager. "A large majority of our readers have indicated they are comfortable with an on-line version and they love the full color photos. They also want the ability to hot-link to other sites and resources."

Readers of the electronic newsletter will have the ability to research newsletter articles more fully than presently, and can select how many data to retrieve at times that are convenient. Articles will include links to other resources on the web. Readers may also print selected areas or the entire newsletter and distribute to their staff when convenient.

"However, if readers prefer the hard copy newsletter, we'll still print them off and mail them to whatever address and in whatever quantity they desire," MacKenzie said.

A sample on-line newsletter is provided by the Alliance to Save Energy. Check it out at [www.ase.org/greenschools/update.html](http://www.ase.org/greenschools/update.html)

Note that readers have more flexibility in viewing and research than now exists with a hard-copy newsletter.

**If you'd like to continue receiving Shop Talk in its paper version, call Consortium staff (360) 902-7338 or E-mail: [abammer@ga.wa.gov](mailto:abammer@ga.wa.gov) and provide address and quantities.**